

Thomaston

A town in Maine--the home of the United States' first Secretary of War, General Henry Knox.

(LSD-28: dp. 11,525; l. 510'; b. 84'; dr. 19'; s. 21 k.; cpl. 304;
t. 300; a. 8 3"; cl. Thomaston)

Thomaston (LSD-28) was laid down on 3 March 1953 at Pascagoula, Miss., by the Ingalls Shipbuilding Corp.; launched on 9 February 1954; sponsored by Mrs. Mathias B. Gardner; and commissioned on 17 September 1954, Capt. Marion F. Ramirez de Arellano in command.

Following shakedown in the Caribbean Thomaston transited the Panama Canal and joined the Pacific Fleet amphibious force. From July through October 1955, Thomaston participated in the Arctic Resupply Project, revictualling stations on the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line before taking part in cold weather landing exercises in the Aleutians in November 1955 and again in January and February of 1956.

The landing ship's activities soon took her southward to the warmer climes of the Hawaiian Islands, where she conducted local operations and exercises in March and April. On hand for the Semana Nautica Celebration in Santa Barbara, Calif., from 2 to 9 July, Thomaston returned to the Hawaiian Islands, and participated in three landing exercises in the fall of the year before returning to the west coast again to conduct exercises off the Marine Corps base at Camp Pendleton, Calif., during the spring of 1957.

She subsequently deployed to the western Pacific (WestPac) in 1959, and participated in exercises off Borneo and Korea, in June and August of that year. Alternating between the west coast and WestPac, Thomaston participated in a busy routine schedule of operations and cruises into the 1960s. During the international tensions brought on by the United States discovery of Russian missile sites in Cuba, Thomaston sailed from the west coast to the Caribbean via the Panama Canal, operating with the Atlantic fleet until tensions abated with the withdrawal of the missiles. She then returned to San Diego on 15 December 1962.

She commenced the year 1963 at her home port of San Diego, and she conducted training exercises into February before serving as primary control ship off "Green" Beach, Del Mar, Calif., during Operation "Steel Gate" from 28 February to 8 March 1963. Thomaston departed the west coast for WestPac on 26 March, and arrived at her base port of Subic Bay on 20 April, via Pearl Harbor. She participated in special operations in the South China Sea from 22 April to 5 May, serving with the Amphibious Force of the 7th Fleet. A second special operation in the South China Sea--again with the amphibious ready group, 7th Fleet--took place in late August and early September.

After operating in Okinawan waters, Thomaston departed Yokosuka, Japan, on 4 November, for the west coast of the United States. While en route, three days later, the LSD received word of a merchantman in distress. Changing course, Thomaston found SS Barbara Fritchie dead in the water, in heavy seas, having lost a propellor and suffering damage to her rudder, leaving her helpless. Thomaston took her in tow and headed for Pearl Harbor, transferring the tow to Cree (ATF-84) on the 12th. The LSD's stop at Pearl Harbor was a brief one though as she arrived and departed for home on the same day, 15 November--making port at San Diego on 21 November.

Thomaston operated out of San Diego on local operations and training through the early fall of 1964, after which time she departed her homeport for the Philippines, to commence another WestPac deployment, on 26 October. Arriving at Subic Bay on 16 November, the LSD conducted special operations in the South China Sea, including a dredge lift from Saigon to Da Nang, South Vietnam, between 21 November and 16 December. Christmas of that year found Thomaston again at sea, on "special operations" in the South China Sea, being present at the initial Marine landings at Da Nang and Chu Lai, South Vietnam, as part of the stepped-up American war effort.

Departing San Diego on 10 January 1965 for WestPac, Thomaston arrived in Vietnamese coastal waters on 5 February, to immediately commence operations at Chu Lai and Da Nang serving as "boat haven" at the latter port. She returned to the United States in the spring of the following year, remaining at San Diego from 9 April to 9 July 1966. She returned to the western Pacific and operated out of Subic Bay, from 28 July. She participated in Operations "Deckhouse III" (phases one and two) and "Deckhouse IV" in August and September. In the former, Thomaston landed Marines north of Vung Tau, and served as primary control ship and boat haven during the subsequent operations. She then landed Marines at a point just south of the demilitarized zone (DMZ) between North and South Vietnam. She thus continued in her familiar role as primary control ship and boat haven during Deckhouse IV, and staged boat convoys carrying supplies nine miles up the Cua Vet River to Dung H a.

Returning to Subic Bay, Thomaston later participated in Exercise "Mudpuppy II"--designed to provide training in river operations for Marines. Held on Mindoro, Philippines, "Mudpuppy II" concluded three days before Christmas, and upon completion of the exercise, Thomaston sailed for Vietnam.

She thus began the year 1967 as she had begun the previous year, in active combat operations against Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army units along the coastline. Participating in "Deckhouse V" and "Deckhouse VI" into March, Thomaston's participation in the former operation began on 5 January 1967 when she dropped anchor off the mouth of the Song Co Chien river. She helped to launch the thrust of Deckhouse V, aimed at the delta lowlands of Kien Hoa province, South Vietnam. The combined United States and Vietnamese Marine Corps' landings successfully challenged Viet Cong forces in this area. Relieved at Vung Tau by Point Defiance (LSD-31) on 6 March, Thomaston sailed for voyage repairs at Subic Bay, en route to the United States, via Hong Kong, Okinawa, Yokosuka, and Pearl Harbor.

Following an extensive overhaul at San Diego, from 28 June to 18 December 1967, Thomaston departed her home port on 21 February for her regular deployment to WestPac. Joining the Amphibious Ready Group off Vietnam in the I Corps zone, Thomaston soon commenced operations in support of Marines of the Special Landing Forces (SLF) engaged ashore in the defense of Quang Tri province. She spent the month of March 1968 steaming in coastwise logistics runs between Da Nang, Cam Ranh Bay, and the burgeoning Army supply base at Thon My Thuy--known colloquially as "Murder Beach."

During her operations at the latter port, Thomaston demonstrated to the Army the versatility of the Landing Ship Dock by serving as an effective repair ship with a built-in drydock. Many small craft and pontoon piers serving the supply base received hull and machinery work by the crew in the ship's capacious well-deck area. Thomaston proved during this deployment that the amphibious ship was a natural vehicle for "interservice cooperation."

While operating with the Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) off the coast of South Vietnam, Thomaston conducted two search and rescue operations. On the evening of 25 May, a CH-46 helicopter, loaded with a routine load of mail, passengers and baggage, lost power in the vicinity of Valley Forge (LPH-8) and crashed. The helicopter remained afloat while those on board jettisoned all excess weight, but gradually sank--fortunately not before all men had safely left the craft. Within a mile of the scene of the accident, Thomaston dispatched two boats to the scene, and recovered not only four of the passengers and crew of the CH-46 (the remainder were picked up by helicopter) but the crew from one of Valley Forge's boats which had capsized upon launching. Later, on 2 June, and while again in the vicinity of Valley Forge, Thomaston came to the rescue, picking up men from the carrier who had jumped overboard to escape flames from a flight deck fire.

Thomaston next participated in "Badger Catch III"--the withdrawal of the Special Landing Force from the Cua Vet river area bordering on the extreme southern edge of the DMZ. Subsequently, Thomaston and her embarked SLF participated in a swift succession of operations against Communist ground forces. Operation "Swift Sabre," plunged into Viet Cong-contested areas of the western shore of Da Nang harbor on 8 June 1968. Following Exercise "Hilltop XX" in Subic Bay, Thomaston participated in "Eager Yankee" which landed elements of the SLF into Quang Tri province in the vicinity of Cua Tu Hien on 9 July, before engaging, 13 days later, in "Swift Play" in the coastal area south of Da Nang. These operations resulted in the capture of significant numbers of weapons and stores, and destruction of operating bases and installations from which the enemy had launched attacks against other "friendly forces." During "Swift Play," Thomaston came under shore battery fire for a brief time.

For the next five years, Thomaston actively supported the war effort in Vietnam, conducted troop and cargo lifts and participated in amphibious operations. The tide of war, however, was running against the South Vietnamese, and by the spring of 1975, concentrated efforts on the part of North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops put pressure on the crumbling south Vietnamese government.

The end for South Vietnam came during Thomaston's 15th WestPac deployment. The beginning of the year 1975 found the landing ship at Subic Bay, Philippines, undergoing a needed availability. Hampering this period of repairs was the stipulation that the ship had to be ready to sail on 48-hour notice. She departed Subic on 2 February for Singapore, where she stayed until the 13th. As a member of Task Group (TG) 76.4, Thomaston later returned to port at Subic on the 25th. The anticipated upkeep period which was to follow, however, was cut short, when she was directed to return to sea with TG 76.4. On 2 March, Thomaston departed Subic to execute Operation "Eagle Pull"--to evacuate Americans and designated Cambodian citizens from the Cambodian capital city of Pnomh Penh. The civilians were to be picked up by helicopters and ferried to the ships offshore.

She remained in readiness until the evening of 5 April, when Thomaston was ordered to Phu Quoc Island, to assist Vietnamese nationals evacuated from Da Nang. She transferred food and medical supplies via her LCUs and LCM-8 assault craft to Vietnamese refugees quartered on Military Sealift Command (MSC) vessels.

TG 76.4 executed "Eagle Pull" on 11 April, and Thomaston took part by taking up a plane guard station to the south of TG 76.4. Upon the successful completion of the operation, designated units of the group proceeded to Settabhib, Thailand, to Debark civilians airlifted from Cambodia. Meanwhile, Thomaston sailed for the Philippines, arriving at Subic Bay on the morning of 17 April, but her much-deserved in-port period was abbreviated by operational necessity. Underway again at 2330 on the 18th, Thomaston sailed for Vietnamese waters to take part in the Gottterdammerung of South Vietnam--the evacuation of the besieged capital of Saigon.

On 29 April, Operation "Frequent Wind" commenced at 1500. During the next nine hours, Thomaston received 811 Vietnamese, American, and third country citizens. For this operation, Thomaston received evacuees via helicopter--landing "choppers" as large as CH-46s on her flight deck aft. All Vietnamese citizens were to be processed and placed aboard MSC ships; American citizens would be retained on board for transportation to the Philippines. Although limited by space, all individuals were provided with food, clothing and medical attention--makeshift shelters were set up on board, the "tents" made from Marine's blankets.

Returning to Subic Bay on 3 May, Thomaston immediately commenced preparations for her homeward deployment. Civilians embarked during "Frequent Wind" were debarked at Subic for further transportation. The ship then proceeded on for the west coast of the United States, via Buckner Bay, Okinawa and Pearl Harbor, and arrived at her homeport--San Diego--on 6 June 1975.

Thomaston subsequently operated with the Pacific Fleet in 1976, conducting training and local operations in waters off Okinawa, Japan, Korea, and Hawaii, before returning to San Diego at the close of the year. She operates on active duty with the Pacific Fleet into 1977.

Thomaston received 11 battle stars for her Vietnam service.

U.S.S. THOMASTON (LSD-28)
SHIP'S HISTORY

15 December 1965

USS THOMASTON is the first of the Navy's newest class of Landing Ship Dock. She was named for Thomaston, Maine, the home of Henry Knox, the Nation's first Secretary of War and first civilian head of the Navy.

The ship was first authorized by the Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Dan A. Kimball, 23 February 1952, designed by Gibbs and Cox, Incorporated of New York City and subsequently built by the Ingalls Shipbuilding Corporation at Pascagoula, Mississippi. The keel was laid 3 March 1953, and the ship launched on 9 February 1954. The THOMASTON was christened by Mrs. Mathias B. Gardner, wife of Vice Admiral Mathias B. Gardner, USN, then the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Plans and Policy.

After commissioning on 17 September 1954, THOMASTON participated in amphibious and underway training in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and then proceeded to join the Pacific Fleet Amphibious Force. THOMASTON was one of the many ships participating in the Arctic Resupply Project of the DEW line from July through October 1955. Later she took part in the First Marine Landing Exercise in November 1955, the Cold Weather Landing Exercise in the same month and the Cold Weather Landing Exercise held in the Aleutian Islands during four weeks of January and February 1956.

Always busy, THOMASTON took part in Hawaiian Area Landing Exercises in March and April 1956; the Semana Nautica Celebration held in Santa Barbara from 2 July through 9 July 1956; three other Hawaiian Area Landing Exercises in the Fall of 1956 and exercise QUICKSTEP off Camp Pendleton in June 1957.

THOMASTON played an important part in such exercises as SADDLE UP off Borneo in June 1959 and SEA HORSE in August 1959 in the Korean Area. Shortly after returning from these WESTPAC exercises in late 1959, THOMASTON participated in amphibious exercise SWAN DIVE off the California Coast.

While enroute to Subic Bay in November 1961, THOMASTON was involved in exercise SILVER SWORD off Maui, Hawaii. Continuing on to the Philippines, she relieved the USS ALAMO (LSD-33) in the Amphibious Ready Force, and shortly thereafter took part in the SEATO exercise TALANGAN. Returning to San Diego in May 1962, THOMASTON and her smart crew received the Battle Efficiency Award from COMPHIBPAC for the just completed training cycle.

Continuously in the picture of our Navy's defense role, THOMASTON transited the Panama Canal to participate in the Cuban Operations during October and November 1962, returning to San Diego, again via the Panama Canal, 15 December 1962. After polishing off refresher training and the major amphibious exercise STEEL GATE in February 1963, she was once again underway in March 1963 to take her place in WESTPAC.

During the 1963 deployment the THOMASTON visited numerous ports of call and participated in two special operations in the South China Sea. While returning to the Continental United States she rescued, by taking in tow, the distressed merchant vessel SS BARBARA FRIETCHIE.

In October 1964 THOMASTON participated in Operation HARDNOSE off the Southern California coast and later the same month deployed once again to the Western Pacific to serve as part of the Ready Amphibious Force of the famed Seventh Fleet. During this deployment THOMASTON was present during the landing of Marines at DaNang, South Vietnam and also played a key role in the landing of Marines at Chu Lai, the largest "over-the-beach" landing since the Korean War.

After visiting Hong Kong, Japan, and Okinawa THOMASTON returned to the United States in June 1965.

Early in August the ship was on her way again, back to WESTPAC special operations in the South China Sea. After stopping again at Japan and Hong Kong the ship returned to San Diego in October.

THOMASTON is 510 feet long, 84 feet wide, has a full load displacement of 11,525 long tons, average draft of 19 feet and is capable of maintaining a continuous speed in excess of 21 knots. She carries a crew of 19 officers and 285 enlisted men, with space for over 300 troop passengers. With her ample storage space, THOMASTON can operate and sustain her full complement of officers, crew, and passengers for three months or longer if necessary.

LSD's are designed to carry various combinations of landing craft and assault vehicles. The provision of portable ramps and intermediate decks enhance the basic flexibility of the load they may carry. The large superdeck aft may be easily used to accommodate the largest helicopter now used by the Armed Services. In addition to carrying amphibious assault vehicles, LSD's are equipped to drydock and repair ships and craft up to and including two (2) Landing Craft Utility (LCU's) at one time. Because of their flexibility, LSD's are one of the hardest working ships in the fleet. It is not uncommon for them to transport tugs, barges, or floating cranes to overseas bases. Recently an LSD transported the Bathythermograph Trieste to the East Coast, to aid in the search of the missing submarine USS THRESHER. One of the Navy's large seaplanes, the P5M Martin Mariner, has on one occasion, been drydocked for emergency repairs in an LSD. The added function of boat control at the Line of Departure during amphibious landing operations has been assigned to the LSD; these control duties were formerly performed by the APD, presently being phased out of the amphibious force. In conjunction with this function, the LSD is also capable of performing the duties of a boat haven involving repair and sustenance of landing craft. The medical facilities available are also quite adequate for the ship to perform casualty evacuation duties. This then is the THOMASTON, Landing Ship Dock 23, a most versatile ship and valuable member of the United States Navy.

THOMASTON'S HISTORY

The USS THOMASTON is the first in her class of "THOMASTON CLASS" LSD's or Landing Ship Dock.

To accomplish her mission, THOMASTON is designed to carry various combinations of landing craft and assault vehicles. A large flightdeck aft is used for helicopter operations.

The ship was first authorized by the Secretary of the Navy on February 28, 1952, and designed by Gibbs and Cox Inc. of New York City. She was built by the Ingalls Corporation at Pascagoula, Mississippi. Her keel was laid March 9, 1953 and she was commissioned on September 17, 1954.

THOMASTON was named for Thomaston, Maine, the home of Major General Henry Knox, the nation's first Secretary of War and civilian head of the Navy.

After her commissioning THOMASTON joined the Pacific Amphibious Force where her first assignments involved the Arctic Resupply project of the Dew Line and Cold Weather Landing Exercise during 1955-56.

THOMASTON commenced her first deployment to the Western Pacific in August of 1957.

During October, 1962, THOMASTON transited the Panama Canal to participate in the Cuban Operations for two months. She returned home through the Panama Canal to her homeport of San Diego in December of that year.

During THOMASTON's sixth Western Pacific Deployment, from October 1964 to June 1965, U.S. Marine Forces were landed at Da Nang and Chu Lai, Vietnam. The ship landed additional Marine forces in 1966, remaining in

Dan Nang for one month repairing boats used to offload merchant ships.

THOMASTON received the Meritorious Unit Citation for action involving seven over-the-beach landings into enemy dominated territory during the period of July 1966 to April 1967.

Because THOMASTON did such an exemplary job throughout the Vietnam era, it was only fitting that she be present for the final chapter of the Navy's involvement in Vietnam.

During THOMASTON's 15th deployment to the Western Pacific, she was awarded the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Meritorious Unit Commendation and the Navy Unit Commendation for her part in the evacuation of Phnom Penh, Cambodia and Saigon, Republic of Vietnam.

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USS THOMASTON (LSD-28)
SHIP HISTORY

THOMASTON WAS NAMED FOR THOMASTON, MAINE, THE HOME OF MAJOR GENERAL HENRY KNOX, THE NATION'S FIRST SECRETARY OF WAR AND CIVILIAN HEAD OF THE NAVY.

- 28 FEB 52: SECNAV AUTHORIZED THE CONSTRUCTION OF THOMASTON AS THE FIRST OF A NEW CLASS OF DOCK LANDING SHIPS.
- 09 FEB 54: SHIP WAS LAUNCHED, CHRISTENED BY MRS. MATHIAS B. CARTER, WIFE OF VADM MATHIAS B. CARTER, THEN DEPUTY CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS.
- 17 SEP 54: THOMASTON WAS COMMISSIONED INTO ACTIVE SERVICE.
- JUL 1955 - PARTICIPATED IN THE ARCTIC RESUPPLY PROJECT OF THE
OCT 1955: DEW LINE. PORTS OF CALL INCLUDED: PT. BOAR, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA AND SEATTLE, WASHINGTON.
- NOV 1955: COMMENCED FIRST MARINE LANDING EXERCISE AND THE COLD WEATHER LANDING EXERCISE HELD IN THE ALEUTIAN ISLANDS.
- FEB 1956: COMPLETED FIRST MARINE LANDING EXERCISE AND THE COLD WEATHER LANDING EXERCISE HELD IN THE ALEUTIAN ISLANDS.
- AUG 1957: DEPARTED SAN DIEGO FOR 1ST DEPLOYMENT WITH THE 7TH FLEET. PORTS OF CALL FOR THE EIGHT MONTH DEPLOYMENT INCLUDED: PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII; SASEBO, YOKOSUKA, AND IWAKUNI IN JAPAN; HONG KONG, B.C.C.; MANILA AND SUBIC BAY, PHILIPPINE ISLANDS.
- 15 JUL 59: WHILE EVADING TYPHOON "BILLIE" OFF COAST OF OKINAWA, AN S.O.S. MESSAGE WAS RECEIVED FROM S.S. BONNIE MARU, AGROUND ON SHOALS OFF NORTHEAST CORNER OF THAILAND SILINI, JAPANESE ISLANDS. THOMASTON PROCEEDED TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE.
- 16 JUL 59: RECEIVED 12 OFFICERS AND 31 MEN FROM S.S. BONNIE MARU, THEN ATTEMPTED TO PULL THE SHIP OFF THE SHOALS WITH ASSISTANCE OF USS BOLSTER (ARS-38). ATTEMPTS WERE UNSUCCESSFUL.
- JUL 1960 - THOMASTON EMPLOYED AS SEVENTH FLEET'S FIRST
DEC 1960: "AMPHIBIOUS READY FORCE" ALONG WITH USS LIHANEE (APA-195). SPECIAL MARINE LANDING FORCE WAS EMBARKED DURING THIS TIME.
- 07 NOV 62: PASSED THROUGH PANAMA CANAL FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS IN THE CARIBBEAN SEA. THOMASTON REMAINED FOR TWO MONTHS AND SAW DUTY IN THE CARIBBEAN AS PART OF THE CUBAN QUARANTINE.

02 DEC 62: PASSED THROUGH PANAMA CANAL ENROUTE SAN DIEGO.

OCT 1964 - 6TH WESTERN PACIFIC DEPLOYMENT. U.S. MARINES WERE
 JUN 1965: LANDED AT DA NANG AND CHU LAI, VIETNAM. THE SHIP
 LANDED ADDITIONAL MARINE FORCES IN 1966 AND REMAINED
 IN DA NANG FOR AN ADDITIONAL MONTH REPAIRING BOATS.

JUL 1966 - THOMASTON RECEIVED MERITORIOUS UNIT CITATION FOR
 APR 1967: ACTION INVOLVING SEVEN OVER-THE-BEACH LANDINGS INTO
 ENEMY DOMINATED TERRITORY.

12 APR - DURING THOMASTON'S 15TH DEPLOYMENT TO THE WESTERN
 30 APR 75: PACIFIC, SHE WAS AWARDED THE ARMED FORCES
 EXPEDITIONARY MEDAL AND MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION
 FOR HER PART IN THE EVACUATION OF PHNOM PENH,
 CAMBODIA (OPERATION EAGLE PULL) AND SAIGON, REPUBLIC
 OF VIETNAM (OPERATION FREQUENT WIND).

FEB 1980: RECEIVED HUMANITARIAN SERVICE MEDAL FOR RADIOACTIVE
 CLEANUP OPERATION ON ENIWETAK ISLAND.

APR 1981: THOMASTON EXPANDED HER PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY FOR THE
 HUMANITARIAN SERVICE MEDAL BY PARTICIPATING IN
 OPERATION BOAT PEOPLE IN WHICH SHE RECEIVED 77
 VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA.

MAY 1981: PARTICIPATED IN PROJECT HANDCLASP IN SRI-LANKA AND
 RECEIVED THE NAVY EXPEDITIONARY MEDAL FOR SERVICE IN
 THE INDIAN OCEAN.

27 JUL 84: THOMASTON RETURNED TO HER HOMEPORT OF SAN DIEGO
 HAVING COMPLETED HER 20TH WESTERN PACIFIC DEPLOYMENT.

USS THOMASTON'S CAPABILITIES

TYPE:	Dock Landing Ship
LENGTH:	510 Feet
BEAM:	84 Feet
DISPLACEMENT:	13,000 Tons
WEAPONS:	3 Twins 3"/50 Caliber Mounts
FLIGHT DECK:	96 X 58 Feet
WELL DECK:	396 X 48 Feet
SPEED:	Over 20 Knots
DRIVE:	2 General Electric Geared Steam Turbines; one for each shaft/screw
ELECTRICAL:	Generator Capability: 4 Generators with 500 KW per Generator

THOMASTON'S most noticeable feature is the large "well" or wet dock reaching from her stern gate and extending into the bulk of the ship. By dropping the large stern gate and flooding her many ballast tanks, THOMASTON can fill the well with up to ten feet of water and allow amphibious landing craft to float into the well for loading and discharge of cargo. Thus, during an amphibious landing, the ship can approach the landing beach and launch pre-loaded assault boats as they are needed.

THOMASTON is an extremely versatile ship. She can offload men and combat equipment via helicopter on her flight deck and transport huge amounts of cargo from the well. This versatility has kept her in constant demand.

HISTORY

USS THOMASTON is the first of a class of dock landing ships built in the 1950's.

The ship was first authorized by the Secretary of the Navy on February 28, 1952, and designed by Gibbs and Cox Inc. of New York City. She was built by the Ingalls Corporation at Pasagoula, Mississippi. Her keel was laid March 9, 1953 and she was commissioned on September 17, 1954.

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THOMASTON received the Meritorious Unit Citation for action involving seven over-the-beach landings into enemy dominated territory during the period of July 1966 to April 1967.

Because THOMASTON did such an exemplary job throughout the Vietnam era, it was only fitting that she be present for the final chapter of the Navy's involvement in Vietnam. During THOMASTON's 16th deployment to the Western Pacific, she was awarded the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, and Meritorious Unit Commendation for her part in the evacuation of Phnom Penh, Cambodia and Saigon, Republic of Vietnam.

The ship's 17th deployment, which was completed on Valentine's Day 1980, included her twenty-fifth birthday celebration.

THOMASTON is currently serving in her 18th Western Pacific deployment.

History Of USS THOMASTON (LSD-23) For Year 1964

- 1 JAN 1964 - In port, San Diego, California.
- 29 JAN - 29 APR 1964 - Yard Period, San Francisco, California.
- 18 MAY - 12 JUN 1964 - Conducted Underway Refresher Training.
- 22 JUN - 3 JUL 1964 - Conducted Amphibious Refresher Training.
- 8 JUL 1964 - 85 Midshipmen reported aboard for summer cruise.
- 20 JUL - 30 JUL 1964 - Midshipman cruise.
- 5 AUG 1964 - Midshipmen departed.
- 31 AUG - 11 SEP 1964 - Proceeded to Clatskanie, Oregon Army Base on boat lift and visited Portland, Oregon.
- 5 OCT - 14 OCT 1964 - Participated in Operation "Hardnose."
- 19 OCT 1964 - Captain Philip G. DYE relieved Captain Charles KOENIGSBERGER as Commanding Officer.
- 26 OCT 1964 - Departed San Diego, California for deployment with the Seventh Fleet as a unit of the Amphibious Ready Force.
- 16 NOV 1964 - Arrived at base port Subic Bay, P.I.
- 21 NOV - 16 DEC 1964 - Conducted special operations in South China Sea, including Dredge Lift from Saigon to DaNang, Viet Nam.
- 25 DEC 1964 - Underway on special operations in South China Sea.